

The Wolf Pack takes on the Marine Corps in ... **HOLLANDIA** 2006



An 80th Fighter Squadron "Juvat" F-16 launches into the sky to take on Marine "adversaries." Both the 80th and 35th Fighter Squadrons engaged Marine Corps F/A-18 "Hornets" during Hollandia activities.



A Marine F/A-18 maintainer gives Lt. Col. Russell Emons, VMF-314 "Black Knights" commander, final instructions before shutdown. The F/A-18 "Hornet" is a twin-engine fighter aircraft.



Marine Cpl. Anthony Clearwater, F/A-18 maintainer, lowers a chaff and flare dispenser. More than 150 Marines are deployed to Kunsan.

By Senior Airman Stephen Collier
Wolf Pack public affairs

Go get 'em Juvats! That was the feeling as the 80th Fighter Squadron "Headhunters" launched into the sky to take on Marine Corps F/A-18 "Hornets" over the Yellow Sea Monday.

The more than 150 Marine pilots and maintainers from Marine Aircraft Group One's VMFA-3M "Black Knights," are deployed to Kunsan. The Black Knights are based out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego, CA., but are currently operating from MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

Hollandia is an annual exercise commemorating the Juvat's "finest hour" when the fighter squadron, commonly referred to as the "Juvats," achieved 33 victories during four days of combat in the Pacific theater during the spring of 1944. During that time, not a single Headhunter pilot was shot down.

Hollandia encompasses two weeks of dissimilar air combat training where F-16s from

Kunsan engage another unit (this year Marine F/A-18s) and exercise on basic fighter maneuvers, air combat maneuvers and air combat tactics. Capt. Frank Lusher, project officer for Hollandia 2006, said people should care about the exercise because it celebrates the rich history of the 8th Fighter Wing.

"Hollandia week" was a week during World War II when the 80th FS had 33 Japanese kills to 0 [80th FS] losses," Capt. Lusher said. "Much like then, when the 80FS flies its missions, it's a direct result of every agency on base. No matter how far removed someone thinks they are from the flightline, they have a direct impact on getting bombs on target."

Hollandia is set up to gradually increase the overall exercise experience for each flyer by increasing the amount of aircraft formations. Early on, one F-16 will go against one F/A-18 in dissimilar air combat training. Later, four Falcons take on four Hornets for air combat tactics.

At the end of Hollandia, 10 F/A-18s verses 16 F-16s (from both the 80th and the 35th Fighter Squadrons) go head to head in major air combat, called a large formation exercise, to test the overall effectiveness of the three weeks worth of training just received. Capt. Lusher described the training as "something we don't necessarily do on a daily basis."

"Every one of our jets is clean (no external fuel tanks or bombs) which allows us to max perform our aircraft on every mission," he said. "The exercise also allows us to not only work jointly but to learn from each other."

Though both fighter squadrons fly fighter aircraft which means we tend to look at flying problems a little differently. The exercise allows us to share the knowledge and experiences we've had flying and allows the Marines to do the same."

Capt. Erik Sprague, an F/A-18 pilot with the Marines, said his unit will be able to take away a lot from their time in Korea.

"We will have enhanced our ability and increased our efficiency at deploying and re-deploying," he said. "This includes our aircraft, maintenance assets and personnel in order to fight side-by-side with the Air Force to Bring the Fight North."

Capt. Sprague added the hospitality his Marines have received during their stay at Kunsan has made them feel welcome.

"The personnel we've dealt with have been professional and good hosts for our squadron," he said. "Kunsan is great place to train on the peninsula because of the availability of ranges out to the west. Even with the less-than-ideal weather over the past week, air traffic controllers have done a great job with controlling the additional aircraft in the air and have allowed things to run smoothly. Also, the facilities here on Kunsan, such as the chowhall (dining facility), billeting, motor pool and community center, have provided for our Marines' needs."



Senior Airman Kyle Brasier, 80th Aircraft Maintenance Unit crew chief, performs his final inspections after a Hollandia flight.